



STANDARD FORM NO. 64

[redacted]

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Assistant Director, Scientific Intelligence DATE: 4 April 1958

FROM : Chief, Applied Science Division, SI

SUBJECT: Comments on Letters Dealing with Unidentified Flying Objects

REFERENCES: (1) Letter to Director, CIA, from Leon Davidson, dated 11 March 1958
(2) Letter to Director, CIA, from Donald E. Keyhoe, Director of National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena

1. As a result of the action taken by the IAC on 4 December 1952 (IAC-M-90, Paragraph 3a), a Scientific Intelligence Advisory Panel was convened 14-18 January 1953. The panel consisted of the following scientists: H. P. Robertson, Luis W. Alvarez, Lloyd V. Berkner, S. A. Goudsmit, and Thornton Page. The panel concerned itself with the evaluation of any possible threat to National Security by unidentified flying objects. The panel issued a report dated 17 January 1953. This report was classified Secret.

2. The letters from Leon Davidson and Donald Keyhoe to the DCI concerned themselves primarily with Edward J. Ruppelt's book on Unidentified Flying Objects. At the time that the scientific panel met, Ruppelt was a Captain in the Air Force and attended the panel meetings. His book, however, is concerned with the identification of unidentified flying objects. Ruppelt's statements regarding the mission of the panel are in error. He has led the reader to believe the panel's mission was to identify the flying objects and to make recommendations on methods to further identify such objects. This is the basis for the apparent contradictions which arose during the Mike Wallace television interview. This is also the basis for Mr. Keyhoe's misgivings.

3. In late October 1957, Major James F. Byrne of AFCIN-X1A requested a declassified version of the panel report. This office contacted each member of the panel and an agreed upon, declassified version was written and sent to the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force on 20 December 1957. It was the decision of all the panel members and the CIA that while no member of the panel objected to the use of his name in connection with the declassified version, they desired that no connection of the panel members with CIA be disclosed.

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4. It is apparent from reading Mr. Davidson's letter that Mike Wallace had a copy of the scientific panel report. In addition, the association of CIA with the US Air Force in the selection of the panel was revealed during the television interview. Therefore, the panel members have been associated with CIA, contrary to their wishes and contrary to CIA's desires.

5. The real intent of the referenced letters is to obtain a copy of the panel report. In view of this, and of the above, it would be most expedient to send them the declassified version. In order to not reveal an association between the panel members and CIA, either the Air Force should answer the letters or we should make it plain to the recipients that we obtained the panel report from the Air Force.

6. Attached are copies of the declassified panel report.

W. E. LEXOW

REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL
ON
UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

17 January 1953

1. The undersigned Panel of Scientific Consultants has met at the request of the Government to evaluate any possible threat to national security posed by Unidentified Flying Objects ("Flying Saucers"), and to make recommendation. The Panel has received the evidence as presented by cognizant Governmental agencies, primarily the United States Air Force, and has reviewed a selection of the best documented incidents.

2. As a result of its considerations, the Panel concludes:

That the evidence presented on Unidentified Flying Objects shows no indication that these phenomena constitute a direct physical threat to national security.

We firmly believe that there is no residuum of cases which indicates phenomena which are attributable to foreign artifacts capable of hostile acts, and that there is no evidence that the phenomena indicate a need for the revision of current scientific concepts.

3. In the light of this conclusion, the Panel recommends:

That the national security agencies take immediate steps to strip the Unidentified Flying Objects of the special status they have been given and the aura of mystery they have unfortunately acquired.

We suggest that this aim may be achieved by an integrated program designed to reassure the public of the total lack of evidence of inimical forces behind the phenomena.

/s/ Lloyd V. Berkner
Associated Universities, Inc.

/s/ H. P. Robertson, Chairman
California Institute of Technology

/s/ S. A. Goudsmit
Brookhaven National Laboratories

/s/ Luis W. Alvarez
University of California

/s/ Thornton Page
John Hopkins University